The class featured in this entry is an instrumental band music class. The size of the class featured in this entry is 31 students in grades 10, 11, and 12, ages 16-18. This class consists of students taking their second year of band, previously completing the beginning band course where they begin playing instruments for the first time. The class comprises of 32 students, 26 Hispanic, 5 African American, and 1 White Caucasion. The primary first language of the majority of students is Spanish, second language English. This class has a large woodwind instrument section, but strong players in the smaller brass and percussion sections keep the balance issues to a minimum to successfully perform the music.

The personality of this class is very positive, motivated, and hard working with an Espirit de corps that has been developed since the beginning of the school year. There are clear leadership positions within the ensemble that have been taken up by various students in each section voluntarily. This class is less competitive and more spirited, fun, and friendly. Students often help each other out in a positive way that does not cause student conflict or ill will. Students often practice their music before class starts and after class ends when they are not required to do so. They also play music they find on the internet, radio, compact discs, and share newly discovered music with each other in and out of class.

One example seen in the video is when I finish rehearsing one piece of music; I step off the podium to inform the students through body language that we are moving on to the next rehearsal piece. The daily agenda and instructional objectives are labeled on the whiteboard so the students know the order of music and what needs to be accomplished for that day. While I give the students a minute to get the next piece of music out to rehearse, the band starts working on the next piece immediately. Without a conductor or any kind of instruction, the students start joining in with each other and start rehearsing the piece. This displays a high level of motivation, spirit de corps, and positive behavior without any instruction or influence directly by the instructor at that moment.

This class has particular dynamics such as students consisting of grade levels 10, 11, and 12 with ages ranging from 14-19 in a co-ed environment. Combining students of different ages and grade levels can have advantages and disadvantages. Some advantages of this particular class are some of the older seniors that have a high maturity level and quickly took on a peer mentoring role to some of the younger students, both inside and outside of class. The disadvantages are the opposite, younger immature sophomore students that cause disruption and get off task frequently. Many of the students are involved in Mexican culture, and share a common 1st language of Spanish, which increases bonding and friendship and the ability to work together in a positive way. Overall this class works together in a positive, enthusiastic, and cohesive way, seen frequently throughout the videotaping.

There are many relevant characteristics of the students that influence my planning and instruction. There is a **wide range of ability levels** due to a combination of factors including students that range in grade level from 10th to 12th grade, students that speak and comprehend English as their second language at varying levels of understanding, lack of respect of authority and behavioral expectations, and low attention spans. Every student took beginning band to advance to their current class, intermediate band. These students came from four different periods of beginning band, to one intermediate band class. Each beginning class last year performed at different levels with different instrumentation and different instrument section numbers. This presented a challenge in getting some students up to speed that were behind, and others continuing to develop their higher level skills. There is a **large divide** between students that practice outside of class, and students that do not. For example, one of the percussionists performs with the after school drum line and practices at home working daily on a packet of exercises and drills I give out to my students. Throughout the year he has far surpassed some of my other percussionists, who are not involved in any other musical activities or practice at home. This causes issues with teaching the lower level students quickly, while keeping the higher level students interested and moving forward musically. Some **social aspects** that cause challenges are students’ reasons for involvement in the program, ranging from taking the class because their friends were in it, meeting a boyfriend or girlfriend, or getting an easy A due to natural talent while giving little effort, or being disruptive and a spectacle in class to gain attention. I had two band students that started dating at the beginning of last year, they were involved in working after school in the band library, practicing, and being leaders. They broke up, there involvement in the program stopped, and one of the students started dating a different student in band, who then got that student pregnant. This caused major incidents at certain points during the year and conflict within the ensemble that negatively impacted the positive learning environment promoted. **English language proficiency can also be a huge challenge** with many of my students speaking English as a second language. Students in my clarinet, alto saxophone, and trombone sections exclusively speak Spanish, with a low level of comprehension when I speak English to them. To combat this I use my low level Spanish speaking skills, use student interpreters, and increase non-verbal, visual, and performance modeling instructional strategies.

This class meets every day during the seventh of eight periods during the school day for 48 minutes. There are a few particular challenges for this class that have impacted the relative musicianship for this class. Although every student is in their second year of band there are a variety of talent, skill, and general knowledge levels represented. The students progressed at different rates based on a number of contributing factors. Some of these factors include the beginning band class they came from, how large there instrument section is, the various parts and level of difficulty of music presented to them in the past, individual home practice, amount of optional after school lessons, individual learning styles, English language comprehension, and learning disabilities.

To describe in greater detail these factors that impact relative musicianship I give a few examples. The first example is the first trombone player who has relatives and family members that have played instruments all their lives. That **outside musical influence and family support has excelled his performance** **ability at a higher rate** than many of the other students in the class. The second example is the band has **smaller instrument sections that limit confidence and strength of sound, peer mentoring opportunities, and leadership**. In smaller instrument sections like the flute section consisting of only two players, those students lack the strength, confidence in sound, leadership, comradely, and peer teaching that other sections utilize to a greater extent such as the clarinet section which consists of 10 players. These varied instrumentation levels can also cause ensemble balance and blend problems that need to be addressed on a daily basis. The third example is the varied music reading comprehension. This poses a challenge because **many students learn primarily by listening, while some learn primarily by sight**. Students that rely first and foremost on learning the music by listening can inhibit their music reading comprehension. The other extreme can also pose problems, relying solely on reading the music and not listening critically. I constantly reinforce the concept of **combining and balancing listening and reading skills to become a more complete musician.** The fourth example is the socio-economic status of my students. Due to a **low income socio economic status**, **no students can afford private instruction** by professionals on their instrument outside of class, besides lessons that I offer pro bono after school. Finally, attendance can be an issue with a class that is near the end of the day.

The goal for this unit from which this lesson was chosen was performance of Pre-Grade 1 to Grade 2 quality music literature for the annual winter concert for parents, school, and community. A contrasting program covering Northridge Overture and the theme from William Tell Overture, an introduction to opera and overtures; to an arrangement of the famous band composer Leroy Anderson’s Sleigh Ride, were performed for this concert. Each piece covered specific concepts that the ensemble needed to work on including dynamics, phrasing, different tempos and rhythms, range boundaries, and different styles.

The main objective of this rehearsal was musical phrasing and the use of dynamics, crescendos and decrescendos to show musical phrasing. The objective was important and appropriate to the students at this time because this was near the end of the rehearsal process where the majority of students were using correct instrument fingerings, pitches, and rhythms. With some of the core fundamentals of the music demonstrated by the students and based on the limited time remaining before the concert, this was the ideal time to implement higher musical ideas such as phrasing to enhance the overall performance of the music.

To exhibit the understanding of the skills selected the students performed on their instruments a legato andante section of one of the rehearsal pieces, Northridge Overture. This section of the music was ideal for demonstrating the use of phrasing due to its melodic structure, legato articulation, slurs, and arching range. I chose to model the objective through music performance on the trumpet.

I used multiple instructional strategies to foster student’s growth throughout the lesson. First, I used **music performance modeling** on two different instruments as an effective tool for implementing instruction. Second, I used **body language** to inform the students of what I want them to think about and what task I wish them to engage in. Third, I used **facial expressions** to suggest what type of emotion or mood I desire the students to feel while they are performing, and to show how passionate I feel when the music is being performed. Fourth, I used **eye contact** and a combination of the non-verbal communication stated earlier, body language and facial expressions, to communicate the attitude, social atmosphere, and expectations of behavior in class. Finally, I **verbally praise and describe** what I want them to perform, think about, or discuss. I widely vary my **vocal inflection** when I am speaking to the class to keep students attentive and listening carefully. Giving positive feedback, support, and enthusiasm is a huge part of my success in class, **positive behavioral instructional strategies** is key in my instruction to create a cohesive learning environment.

I fostered the diversity of my students in many ways throughout the rehearsal. Many of my students come from rough lives outside of school ranging from bullying, gangs and gang related violence, to absent parents and little to no structure or behavioral expectations. One of the ways I deal with this is having rehearsals that are highly structured with strict behavioral expectations, but are **welcoming, positive, encourage social bonding, and are enthusiastic**. Yelling at the students, using fear to attain goals, acting in a threatening manner, and not giving constructive criticism in a positive way leads to disaster in the student population I am teaching. These strategies will not work with the student culture I am instructing, and I believe are not sound rehearsal strategies, but which I have seen at many schools even at the highest levels. If mistakes are made I try to correct them while **avoiding lowering self esteem or confidence**. I do not highlight the mistakes but correct them by modeling or performing with the students encouraging confidence and giving an example of the correct way to perform the problematic section of music. The specific example of this in the recording happens two minutes into the videotaping where I rehearse the trombone section. The trombones come in late after resting for a few measures for an important entrance. Instead of verbally telling the trombones that they were wrong, I give them a second chance to correct the error. I rehearse that portion of the music again and make my conducting and body language much more exaggerated, queuing their entrance. When this doesn’t correct the error, I rehearse only the trombone section, performing with them on their specific instrument. I verbally tell them to tap their feet and feel the beat, tap my foot to model the correct behavior, and perform with them a few times. After the trombones successfully perform the musical passage without the band twice, I quickly include the rest of the band so I do not lose attentiveness. This is crucial in keeping everyone involved and on track. The trombones missed their entrance when the band was brought back in because they were not in playing position, so I acted out in a humorous way a performer not being ready slowly raising my trombone and going “HUHHH? OH!” Using humor instead of criticism to get a desired result or fix an error is highly effective when dealing with my student’s psychology and background. I rehearsed that section again performing with the trombones and they played it successfully.

I employed my own musicianship to facilitate student learning through performing on the trombone early in the videotaping, conducting in an expressive manner to show phrasing, articulation, and dynamics throughout the recording; and performing on the trumpet at the end of the videotape to demonstrate the correlation between dynamics, range, and phrasing.

I established a learning environment in which students’ behaviors exhibit good musicianship through practicing rehearsal etiquette and behavior at the beginning of the school year, and constantly reinforcing those strategies throughout the year. Specifically in the videotape, **three ways** I establish a learning environment that promotes good musicianship are one, **reinforcing behavioral expectations such as the podium rule** (students going into ready position with their instruments on their knee, eyes on the director, and not talking) by introducing these rehearsal procedures at the beginning of the year and reinforcing them **using body language**. Two, **verbally reminding students of what they need to be doing** between rehearsal pieces or during time where I work one on one with students or sections, and third, **expectations and desired behaviors** in T-chart format posted on the orange poster which you see during the entire videotape on the far wall. **The first example** is when I step off the podium between each rehearsal piece. This is the students’ time to get out the next piece to be rehearsed, practice, peer mentor, and do what they need to do to perform at their best. **Specifically in the videotape**, approximately 5 minutes into the videotape, after rehearsing the first piece Theme from William Tell Overture, I got off the podium and walked around helping students individually answering any questions or concerns they might have, while many of the students decided to start performing the next piece, Holiday Medley with each other without a conductor. Approximately 6 ½ minutes into the videotape when I got back on the podium to start the next piece and get down to business, I jokingly stated “You started without me!” and the students laughed and became excited. Despite the advantages of using humor in instruction to ease rehearsal pressures and create a friendly, positive atmosphere, it can sometimes slow down the rehearsal process too much, and after a humorous moment, the class still needs to get back to business quickly. After the humorous moment the students became overly excited, so to bring the class back on track I arched my back, crossed my arms across my chest, used eye contact and turned my head back and forth. Using this exaggerated body language, I told the students to go into ready position with their instrument on their knee, quiet down, listen, make eye contact with the instructor, and be ready for directions. The students quickly reacted to this body language queue, students put their instruments on their knee and showed me they were ready, and the class became focused and ready to move on to the next rehearsal piece. The **second example**, specifically reminding students verbally of what they need to be doing, comes right after the first rehearsal piece; Theme from William Tell Overture was finished. Approximately 5 minutes into the video I tell the students “next tune” and step off the podium. I state “**start practicing (the next piece) immediately, the trouble sections**.” This reminds the students that it is not time for a break, but to start focusing on the next piece. I then proceed to walk around working one on one briefly with any student that needs extra help or has a question. The students immediately start practicing the next piece, Holiday Medley, and stay on track. The **third example** is the large orange poster posted on the far wall, a T-Chart with P.A.R.R. at the top of expectations and behaviors. The acronym P.A.R.R. (Productive, Appropriate, Respectful, Responsible) is at the top, with the T-chart giving examples of behaviors that students should and shouldn’t do. One side of the T-chart are behaviors and expectations that are expected in the band room, such as being prepared for class, keeping electronic devices off and stowed away, and the podium rule. The other side of the T-chart is the opposite behaviors that are inappropriate such as not having your instrument out and ready when class begins, texting on your cell phone, and talking or playing out of turn when the director is on the podium.

My students demonstrated their developing musicianship through performing on their instruments the directed selections of music both as an entire ensemble and in instrument sections. **Specifically in the videotape**, approximately 10 minutes and 10 seconds into the recording, the students perform the andante introduction to Northridge Overture. To increase the musicality of that section of music, I first inform the students verbally to phrase the music using a crescendo as the range goes higher in the music, then decrescendo when the range goes lower. To practice this phrasing strategy, I use **a concert Bb scale as a tool**. The students start at the bottom of the scale playing pianissimo and then crescendo to the octave, then decrescendo back down to the tonic. When the students perform the concept accurately using the scale, I then go back to the music, **model** the use of dynamics and range on my trumpet, remind the students verbally of the concept, then rehearse the entire band. The students then perform the music with the desired phrasing. The students demonstrated their developing musicianship through first performing the musical selection without dynamic contour. They then applied this dynamic phrasing performing the concert Bb scale. They used listening skills when I modeled the phrasing on the trumpet, and then performed the musical selection with dynamic contour and phrasing which demonstrated their development. **Another specific example** starts approximately 1 minute and 30 seconds into the recording when the students are performing Theme from William Tell Overture. The trombone section comes in late a few times performing with the entire band. I then model and perform with the students on trombone and break down the ensemble to only the trombone section. I use verbal, non-verbal, and performance modeling instructional strategies to correct the error, and bring the entire ensemble back in. The trombones correctly perform their part demonstrating developing musicianship.

I made one **significant unexpected change** to my planned instruction when I rehearsed the trombone entrance at the beginning of the videotape. The focus of this lesson was on musical phrasing and dynamics. The first objective was applying these concepts to the first piece Theme from William Tell Overture, specifically last 16 measures. I started at the beginning of the piece to perform a complete run through of the piece as the rehearsal schedule was nearing completion with the concert quickly approaching. When the trombones missed their entrance, this prompted the change in planned instruction, and I chose to quickly fix the rhythmic error instead of ignoring it. I made this unexpected change in my planned instruction because rhythmic errors took priority over the objective of musical phrasing, and I believed this could quickly be corrected.

I use many specific procedures to assess my students developing musicianship including performing as an ensemble, as an instrument section, practicing individually, one on one instruction, and points in the lesson where students use critical listening skills as I give verbal instruction and instrumental music performance modeling. Other specific procedures are performing compositions in their entirety to gain a broad context, performing large sections of the compositions that are problematic, or working on smaller sections of the music that could be only a few measures in length. These procedures vary depending on what chronological point the band is in the rehearsal schedule. When the band starts a concert season, sight reading, rhythmic exercises, scale studies, and the rehearsal of entire pieces from start to finish are focused on. Half way through the season the rehearsal focus starts to narrow working on smaller problematic sections, and having students perform individually or in instrument sections. As time passes and the concert is weeks and then days away, the focus widens back to performing the entirety of compositions and in larger sections or the entire ensemble. This macro-micro-macro rehearsal schedule would look like a bow tie, rehearsing the larger scope (macro), getting to specifics (micro), and then back to the larger context (macro) within the time allotted for any given concert.

There are many examples of verbal and non-verbal feedback regarding my students developing musicianship throughout the videotape. First, I will cite specific examples of non-verbal feedback which happen frequently throughout the taping. The first example happens at 1 minute and 8 seconds where I use my left hand to decrescendo, make eye contact with the percussion section, and make a hand signal pointing two fingers at my eyes telling them to watch the conductor and decrescendo with the band. Often students’ eyes get glued to the page of music and do not look up to keep the tempo steady with the conductor, follow queues, or perform dynamics**. Eye contact and hand signals** can be non-verbal feedback I give the students that is useful in supporting their musicianship, and reinforces the concepts of reading music, listening, and watching the conductor. Another example is at 11 minutes and 57 seconds when I slowly pull my trombone up and act startled**, acting out a trombone player that isn’t ready** to make an entrance after resting, non-verbally informing the trombones that they need to be ready. This is in reaction to the trombones earlier missing there entrance to the section being rehearsed.

I give many examples of **verbal feedback** throughout the rehearsal. This happens first while the students are performing when I say “watch the tempo” 35 seconds into the taping, reacting to the melodic line and bass line not performing the same tempo. At 1 minute 28 seconds, when I stop the band for the first time during the first piece, Theme from William Tell Overture, I state “Trombones, got to count, got to count,” giving them verbal feedback so they will count rests and not play a late entrance. At this point I also state “Tap your foot” to help feel the beat and rhythms, and bring the band back in. After I rehearse the trombones as a section I state, “I feel like your guessing, I want you to tap your feet and feel the beat,” verbally giving them feedback that there entrance can be more rhythmically accurate. At 3 minutes and 54 seconds I give praise to the band and clarinet section while addressing the trombones, “Better! Guys, when the clarinets start it, nice job clarinets, have your bones ready during the rests.” **Praising the band is useful in supporting their musicianship** because it promotes self esteem and confidence which improves performance. I praise the band again at 7 minutes 10 seconds, after rehearsing the second piece in the video, Holiday Medley, a 4 measure decrescendo that the band performs successfully. I say to the band “excellent! Do it again, one more time, play for four measures and stop, then we’ll work on the ¾ (transition). At 8 minutes and 38 seconds the band finishes performing the second rehearsal piece, Holiday Medley, and I first give praise saying “good, nice crescendo,” then proceed by giving the verbal feedback, “Don’t speed up, watch me on the ritardando.” Giving verbal feedback that **starts with a positive, and then constructive criticism**, can promote a positive learning atmosphere and not lower self esteem or confidence by making mistakes or forgetting important details in the music. At 11 minutes 9 seconds in the recording, the band finishes playing the introduction to Northridge Overture, the final piece in the video. I give the following verbal feedback, “Good, now I want you to think about in the beginning, low notes play soft, and high notes, I want you to play out more, crescendo…,” I then proceed by having the band play a concert Bb scale. Finally at 13 minutes and 54 seconds, while rehearsing Northridge Overture, I say “Good, very good, alright, it was **amazing** until (measure) 9, and then we kind of lost it…” and then proceed to model the desired dynamic phrasing on the trumpet. I again **praise the band for their opening performance** and performing dynamic phrasing in relation to range. This **positive reinforcement verbal feedback** was useful in supporting their developing musicianship because it told the students that they played correctly up until measure 9, and that they need to continue that same phrasing after measure 9, to the end of the introduction 8 measures later.

Entry 3 Reflection:

I feel to a large extent the demonstration of my own musicianship was supportive to student learning and highly effective in students gaining understanding in relation to their own performance. Using performance modeling and expressive conducting can impact student learning on a higher level than merely verbally giving instructions. Music as an art form can sometimes not be put into words, but must be demonstrated. When I performed on the trombone during the videotape, I performed with the students, **directly supporting the sound, giving confidence to the players, and giving an example of the way I want the musical line to be played**. If I did not demonstrate this and perform with them, it would of have been much harder to get the point across through verbal or other means of instructing them. When I performed on the trumpet near the end of the video, there was no better instructional strategy then to demonstrate the phrasing through performing. I directly show what is possible musically through my performance, and what I want the band to think about and add to their musical knowledge and performance base. There are a few things in hindsight that I could have done to make the demonstration of my musicianship more successful. While playing the trombone line, I could have played softer at the beginning and then played a crescendo, demonstrating the dynamic phrasing in relation to range that was the focus of the lesson. I only modeled on brass instruments during this class period, trombone and trumpet, when I possibly could have included examples on woodwind or percussion instruments as well. When I was demonstrating on the trumpet near the end of the video I could have tried to get the class more focused by stepping off the podium and communicated that they need to listen critically, some students were talking or not paying attention.

There are many subsequent learning experiences I will design for these students based on this assessment. To work on tempo I will create multi-layered rhythmic exercises that can be done at the beginning of the class to work on ensemble tempo issues and independence of musical line while sustaining the beat. I will choose rehearsal pieces with varying styles, articulation, dynamics, and tempos, to give a variety of opportunities to apply musical concepts addressed during this semester. I will increase the time spent on long tones in the warm up routine currently in place, adding crescendos and decrescendos for a varying number of beats. I will practice scales during the warm-up routine adding dynamics like I used in the middle of rehearsal when the band performed the Bb scale. I will choose rehearsal pieces that add more complex syncopation and rhythmic complexity to continue improving rhythmic skills and counting. I will add a short improvisation warm up where students tap their feet, count, and improvise a beat pattern promoting rhythmic pulse and accuracy in relation to tempo.

I would modify my instruction and assessment in this lesson if I could teach it again in a few different ways. I would **perform on woodwind or percussion** instruments and not just brass. I would try and **increase the attentiveness** of the class by stepping off and on the podium more, **emphasizing the podium rule**. Instead of being on the podium almost the entire time, I would increase the amount of time spent **working one on one with students**, or sitting in different instrument sections **performing with the students**. I would have students play individually, such as in the trombone section, and use a **student that played their part successfully as an example to the others**. In relation to the before mentioned point, I would choose students I knew could play certain parts using the correct phrasing and have them model for the class. I would **reduce verbal instruction** and use more non-verbal and performance modeling to communicate my instruction and concepts. I believe despite these few changes that could have been done, I strongly believe this was an effective lesson based on the instructional strategies applied throughout the lesson, and thus had a significant impact on student learning.